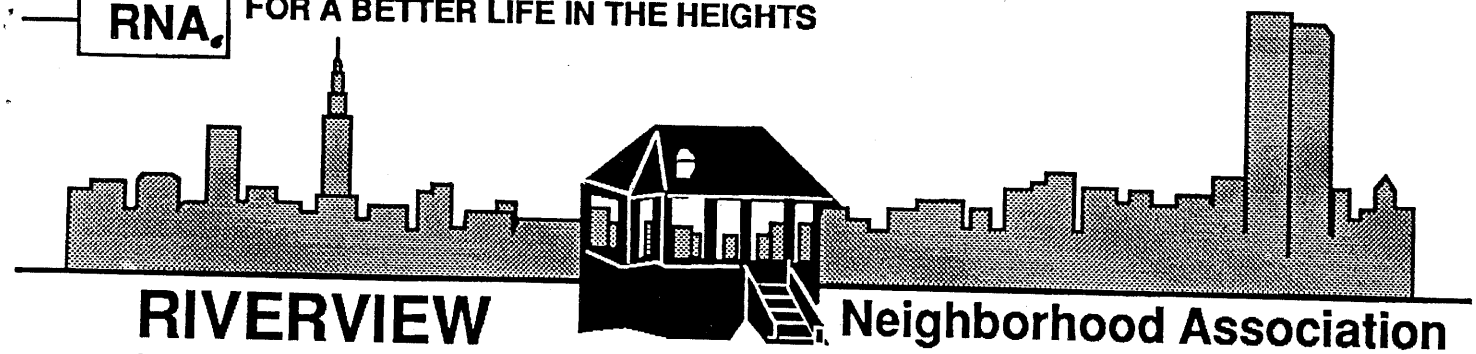
RNA FOR A BETTER LIFE IN THE HEIGHTS



RIVERVIEW Neighborhood Association

February, 2000

232 Ogden Avenue - Jersey City, N.J. 07307 - (201) 798-0493

RNA IS NOT AFFILIATED WITH ANY POLITICAL PARTY, ORGANIZATION OR ELECTED OFFICIAL

SIGN-UP for PERMIT PARKING

The **Jersey City Parking Authority** (JCPA) is now accepting applications for its Residential Zone #2 Permit Parking Program in our community. A resident, whose vehicle is registered at a Jersey City address, is only required to pay a $5.00 annual fee for the privilege of parking on the public streets. If your motor vehicle is registered at a non-Jersey City address, you are considered a "non-resident" and required to pay an annual fee of $250.00 for the same parking privilege. After **February 29, 2000**, individuals that do not have permits will only be allowed to park on the streets for a maximum of two hours - after which they will be subject to a parking summons and other penalties.

Individuals residing on the following streets are required to have a parking permit:

Bowers Street (27-106); **Cambridge Avenue** (123-277); **Congress Street** (4-108); **Cuneo Place** (Entire Length); **Ferry Street** (2-19); **Franklin Street** (24-54); **Griffith Street** (26-40); **Hancock Avenue** (123-273); **Hobson Street** (Entire Length); **New York Avenue** (285-452); **North Street** (1-79); **Ogden Avenue** (Entire Length); **Palisade Avenue** (296-671); **Sherman Avenue** (167-317); **South Street** (1-85); **Webster Avenue** (223-396) and **Wood Place** (Entire Length).

A copy of this application is on page 10 of this newsletter. Applications can also be obtained from the JCPA's offices at 394 Central Avenue, by phone at (201) 653-6969 or at Jersey City's website at **www.cityofjerseycity.com/docs/residential_parking_permit_application**. You can either file the application in person at the above offices Monday to Friday between 9AM to 5PM or mail it in with a check payable to the Parking Authority.

For more information, call **(201) 653-6969**. Remember the JCPA will start enforcing the permit parking in our community on February 29th.

YEAR 2000 MEMBERSHIP DUES

Most people do not realize that a neighborhood association requires active participation of all of its members. Part of that participation is the payment of the annual membership dues of $7.00 per person. This is not a lot of money when you consider that it entitles you to nine issues of our monthly newsletter, and voting privileges, if you live within the RNA boundaries.

Please support your community by paying your dues at the next meeting, or sending a check, payable to RNA, to 232 Ogden Avenue. *(Any paid member who has not received their newsletters or a membership card, please contact RNA.)* **The Executive Committee**

REACTIVATION *of* STANDING COMMITTEES

At last month's meeting, it was proposed that RNA reactivate several committees to help monitor the current issues that are confronting our community. Because of the current need to attend meetings, review proposals and monitor developments, these committees will insure that our community is properly informed and represented in these matters. Participation by the membership is needed because it is impossible for the Executive Committee to adequately represent RNA in all of these matters.

On January 19th, RNA's **Planning and Development Committee** held a meeting to discuss two important matters: our participation in the **Palisade Avenue Steering Committee** and the proposed recommendations to **Jersey City's Master Zoning Plan.** It was decided that the most efficient way to proceed was to form two subcommittees: one to monitor and participate in each project. *[The following two articles will discuss the position of RNA regarding the Palisade Avenue project and the proposed Master Plan.]*

In addition, RNA is reactivating its **Park** and **Public Safety Committees.** The Park Committee, working together with other community groups, is responsible for monitoring the maintenance and improvements in our Riverview-Fisk Park and Janet Moore Park, including the Riverview Community Garden.

Continued on next page...

ANNUAL RNA ELECTIONS

It's time once again to elect the annual executive officers for RNA. The nominations for **Chair, Vice-chair, Treasurer, Secretary** and **Sgt.-at-Arms** for the 2000-2001 term will be opened at the **February 8th** meeting. The nominations will remain open until the **March 14th** meeting, at which time they will be closed and the election will take place.

To be eligible to vote, you must be eighteen years old, have paid your annual dues and live or own property within the constitutional boundaries of the RNA. The Association's boundaries are Ogden and Palisade Avenues from Cuneo Place to Congress Street.

To run for office, an individual, in addition to the above qualifications, must be a current resident living within the RNA boundaries and an active member of RNA.

RNA asks everyone to participate in this annual neighborhood activity. It is important for all residents to have a voice in decisions made in their own community.

REACTIVATION: *Continued from page One...*
The Public Safety, or Crime Committee acts as a liaison with the local police to monitor crime problems.

RNA encourages all its members to participate in these subcommittees. Anyone interested should come to the February 8th meeting or call **Maria Tuzzo** at **659-2245** to volunteer.

RNA's By-laws provide for the establishment of the following standing committees: Community Awareness, Planning & Development, Traffic, Crime, Sanitation and Parks. Provision was also made for additional standing committees to be created as the need arose to monitor other developing concerns. Active committees are required to make periodical reports to the general membership at the monthly meetings and in this newsletter.

RNA *to participate in* PALISADE AVENUE STEERING COMMITTEE

The City has scheduled the first meeting of the **Palisade Avenue Steering Committee** for Thursday, January 27th at the Community Center at Pershing Field. On January 19th, a group of RNA members met to discuss our participation in this process, including **Doris Brown, Vito Brunetti, Steve Carr, Len Davis, Michael Fontana, Rick Leon, Pam Shaw.**

It was decided that the RNA newsletter mailing list will be expanded for the next several months to better inform the community, especially residents of Palisade Avenue who would be most affected by any plans that will be proposed through this steering committee. In addition, RNA will offer to translate the newsletter into Spanish for any resident who might need this service. Rick Leon volunteered to translate the newsletter by using an Internet website known as Alta Vista.

A request was made for more members, participating in this and other reactivated committees, to write articles for the newsletter about any issue that they learn about in order to allow for a better dissemination of this information throughout our community. Likewise, RNA will make sure that the membership is better informed about these issues and other individual requests.

There was general consensus that any proposed plan for the Avenue should not be placed under the jurisdiction of the Jersey City Redevelopment Agency (JCRA). This is because of the disturbing reports received from other community redevelopment steering committees. It appears that even under a rehabilitation plan, the designated area would still be under the jurisdiction of the JCRA with the power to amend the plan, expand the boundaries and generally ignore the steering committee after exhausting the committee's limited resources of time and energy.

Instead it was felt that the community should keep its independence and search for new alternatives. Two such alternatives include the creation of a community-based Community Development Corporation (CDC) as in instrument to funnel federal and state grants to this area and the possibility of a reconstituted Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS) that would facilitate the renovation and facade grants to property owners, who often find the process daunting.

The members then proceeded to discuss the announced agenda for this first steering committee meeting:

a) **Designation of a Meeting Facilitator:** It was decided that this position should be rotated until a suitable candidate was agreed upon. A facilitator is responsible for keeping the meetings on track by maintaining order and fairness. Time limits for individual comments was considered.

b) **Designation of a Recording Secretary:** It was decided to rotate this position as well and that RNA would volunteer its audio tape recorder so that the minutes of the meetings could be transcribed for the benefit of the community.

c) **Devise Organizational Structure:** Some discussion was spent on the thorny question of voting structure: should the vote of an individual member hold the same power and weight as a person representing a community organization? More discussion will be needed to insure that the power of the community is well respected.

d) **Define Mission of the Steering Committee:** RNA will advocate the adoption of the following positions for this Committee:

1) the Palisade Avenue study area should not become part of a redevelopment plan, or placed under the auspices of the JCRA;

2) the emphasis of any plan should be on revitalization and restoration of existing structures over blighting or demolition;

3) the support of existing businesses on the Avenue and the stimulation of new ones;

4) the enforcement of municipal and state building codes, especially against out-of-town property owners;

4) the City should foreclose on properties with tax liens that far outstrip their market value and then return these properties to a CDC;

5) as a show of good faith, the City should honor its long standing commitments to our community, including the repaving of Palisade Avenue and the completion of Mountain Road;

6) the installation of new sidewalks, benches, street lighting and bus-stop kiosks;

7) the placement of a temporary police headquarters in our community should be in either a vacant building on the Avenue or in a trailer in a vacant lot off the Avenue; and

8) a more effective police presence - both uniform and undercover on the Avenue.

To learn more about the process of revitalization, RNA will sent up a meeting with Michael Young of the Central Avenue SID. Finally it was agreed that the steering committee should begin its meetings at 7PM to allow for greater participation from residents coming homing from work. *Rick Leon*

On Thursday, January 27th, the first meeting of the Palisade Avenue Steering Committee took place in the Community Center at Pershing Field. In their first show of consensus, representatives of **RNA, Heights Hope, the Palisade Avenue Coalition** and **Sgt. Anthony Neighborhood Association** along with ten individual members of the community voted to appoint **Doug Greenfeld** of the Jersey City Planning Division (JCPD) as the meeting facilitator and recording secretary until the group establishes rules and an organizational structure. Councilpersons **Tom DeGise** and **Bill Gaughan** also participated in this meeting.

After everyone introduced themselves, the first discussion concerned the issue of how the group should vote, including such issues as the weight of a neighborhood group versus an individual resident; should voting membership be limited to specific boundaries; and

should there be a just a majority vote or a consensus with recognition of dissenting views?

Tom DeGise then announced that on January 26th, the City Council rescinded the redevelopment designation for Palisade Avenue because the recent JCPD survey revealed that the study area did not meet the statutory criteria for eligibility. He then went on to say that because of that action, there was a need for the steering committee to establish a legitimate structure in order for the City to utilize the approximately $350,000.00 in CDBG funds that will be appropriated by the Heights Council delegation for Palisade Avenue by the next month.

The discussion then focused on the alternatives available for revitalizing the Avenue, including creation of a CDC; establishing rehab programs like the successful Heights NHS or sweat equity programs like Habitat for Humanity; UEZ designation; and applying for state planning grants.

The emphasis for any project should be the rehabilitation of existing residential properties through facade and interior renovation. There was also a suggestion that any revitalization could only succeed if there was an additional component to stimulate existing businesses or start-up new ones. The group generally agreed that the City should start the process by carrying out its commitments to repave the Avenue which would include new sidewalks, curbcuts and catch basins. Several people inquired about the City's abandoned building program.

Bill Gaughan described the structure that Central Avenue used for its recent upgrading: the development of a Special Improvement District (SID). Whereby individual property and business owners agreed to a self-assessment tax to pay for their special services, such as sanitation, security, street and holiday lighting. Because of the interest for a UEZ designation for the Avenue it was suggested that Stuart Kopperweis of Jersey City's Economic Development Corporation (EDC) should be a guest speaker at a future meeting. It was also decided that a subgroup of the steering committee would meet with Ann-Marie Uebbing, the City's CDBG facilitator to discuss our community's eligibility for this funding.

RNA was represented by Doris Brown, Vito Brunetti, Len Davis, Rick Leon and John McCarthy. *The session ended with the decision to meet every two weeks at 6:30 PM, with the next session scheduled for February 16th.*

RNA'S PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

In addition to participating in the Palisade Avenue Steering Committee, RNA has set up a Master Plan Subcommittee to monitor the proposed changes to the City's Zoning Ordinance that affect our community. It was discovered at the City's January 5th Public Hearing that the recommendations include changing:

a) the area below the Palisade cliffs from Industrial zoning to Residential R-4; and

b) the zoning for Palisade and Ogden Avenues south of Franklin Street from Residential R-4 to R-2.

This committee will begin its work by looking into the following alternatives:

1) adoption of a Steep Slope ordinance by the City in order to protect the Palisade cliff face itself and the land above and below it;
2) the need to preserve view corridors in front of public land as well as private property; and
3) the reduction of the proposed R-4 zone below the cliff to R-2 or R-3.

RNA will also lobby to make sure that the zoning of the southern end of Ogden and Palisade Avenues will be converted to R-2 to preserve the neighborhood character of the existing community.

In addition, there are several proposed developments in Jersey City and in the neighboring towns of Hoboken and Weehawken that could have an impact on our community in terms of increasing traffic flow and affecting our views. There appears to be a need for RNA to work with other community groups in formulating a regional approach to confront these projects. To that end, a series of meetings with City agencies and other community groups, such as the **Coalition for a Better Waterfront** in Hoboken, **Friends of the Weehawken Waterfront** and the **Jersey City Downtown Coalition of Neighborhood Associations** are in the process of being set up to begin this dialogue.

RNA members **Debbie Klein, Kevin Mahony, Sandy Martinez, John McCarthy, Randy Sanford, Clif Steinbring, Maria Tuzzo,** and **Cindy Zuanick** along with several of the members of the Palisade Avenue Steering Committee volunteered to participate in this project.

THE CITY'S JANUARY 5th PUBLIC HEARING

On January 5, 2000, the City held a Public Hearing in P.S. 8 to discuss results of their recent survey of properties on Palisade Avenue between South and Prospect Streets and parts of New York and Webster Avenues between Griffith and Franklin Streets. The survey was undertaken to begin a public dialogue with the residents for the purpose of revitalizing the Avenue. The meeting was well attended by several hundred residents and property owners.

The City was represented by Planning Director **Robert Cotter,** City Planner **Douglas Greenfeld**, Councilmen **Tom DeGise, Bill Gaughan** and **Arnold Bettinger** and **Mayor Bret Schundler.** An interpreter was provided for the Spanish speaking members of the audience. The results of the survey and the explanation of the planning process were presented by overhead projection.

The Mayor opened the meeting, by announcing that as a result of the survey, Palisade Avenue did not meet the criteria to be considered for a redevelopment plan. Robert Cotter then described the process that the City had undertaken to arrive at that conclusion. He also reiterated that the area was not in need of redevelopment and despite rumors to the contrary, there was no plan for Palisade Avenue.

Cotter explained the difference between rehabilitation and redevelopment: although both supercede the existing zoning, redevelopment allows condemnation through the power of

eminent domain whereas rehabilitation does not. He informed the audience that at present, there are two redevelopment plans in our community: the Webster Avenue Plan since 1979 and the city-wide Vacant Building Plan of 1999.

He explained the statutory criteria that was used to evaluate an area, including the physical condition of existing structures, abandoned commercial/industrial buildings, vacant land not likely to be developed privately, land use that is adverse to the public welfare and the lack of proper utilization of properties caused by title or density. He then described the survey process, including the identification of existing conditions of each property within the study area, photographing each property and the creation of a colored coded map to reflect these results.

Cotter stated that as a result of this survey, the Planning Division concluded that 90% of the study area was in good or fair condition and that there was no pattern or consistency of poor building conditions. He also announced that as a result of this survey, he was able to recommend to the consultants preparing a new Master Zoning Plan for the City that Palisade Avenue should remain as it is currently zoned - Residential, R-2. Cotter stated that there were very few properties in this area that were eligible for historic landmark status. He also mentioned that many of the properties were owned by out-of-towners.

He recommended that the next step was to organize a community-based planning process in order to identify broad goals for the revitalization of Palisade Avenue. This could be accomplished by establishing a steering committee, to facilitate communication and maintain the focus on the Avenue, which would be made up of neighborhood and merchant groups, local Council members and members of the Planning Division. He discussed the option of establishing a community development corporation (CDC) which would help in applying for federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and state Urban Enterprise Zone (UEZ) funds.

Council President Tom DeGise announced that the City has already made commitments to upgrade the community, including the proposed fire station to be build on the corner of Palisade Avenue and Congress Street; the repaving of the Avenue from State Highway to Paterson Plank Road; the decision to establish a mini police precinct on the Avenue and the resumption of work on the Mountain Road renovation.

At this point, the meeting was opened up to questions and comments from the public. A recurring comment was that what was really needed in this area was better city services, including more police patrols and earlier garbage pick-ups. There was a group of residents, including members of RNA, Heights Hope and the Palisade Avenue Coalition that were prepared to protest their opposition to the announcement of any proposal that would allow the City to designate the Avenue for redevelopment. Tenants living in the Belvedere Court apartments expressed their concerns about rumors that their building would be gentrified and they would be relocated.

Despite the assurances by City officials to the contrary, the public seemed to maintain a suspicious attitude towards the City's intentions for Palisade Avenue. The City requested that all individuals and community groups interested in participating in the steering committee process should sign up in order to receive the announcement for the next meeting.

An unintended result of this meeting was the discovery of two zoning recommendations made by the Master Plan consultants which would impact on our local community. The first was that the zoning for the area encompassing Palisade and Ogden Avenues south of Franklin Street, should be changed from residential R-4 to R-2 to better reflect the existing building density. This would be a welcome relief for both RNA and the Sgt. Anthony Neighborhood Association who have battled Christ Hospital's expansion plans in this area.

The second recommendation was unfortunately not so well received. It was that the zoning in the industrial area below the Palisade cliffs be changed from Industrial to Residential R-4, which would permit high-rise development. See the article on the Master Plan Subcommittee on page 3 for further information.

MEETING MINUTES:

[This month's Meeting Minutes is devoted to brief summaries of two RNA meetings: a special meeting held on December 28, 1999 to discuss the City's plans for Palisade Avenue and the regular monthly meeting held on January 11, 2000.]

December 28, 1999

RNA decided to hold a special meeting to address the concerns and questions of many residents about the City's plans to revitalize Palisade Avenue. Many people expressed fear that the City could destroy this neighborhood by declaring the area a redevelopment zone. Their concerns were that once the Avenue was a designated redevelopment zone, the City would have the power to take away private property by condemnation through the power of eminent domain. The City would supposedly then be able to designate a private developer who would be able to propose high rise projects.

Many residents also expressed anger that the City had not discussed their intentions with the community before beginning this planning project. Some people also accused Vito Brunetti, current RNA chairperson, of discussing this project with the City before getting the approval of the membership.

From these and other concerns, RNA drew up the following questions that would be presented to City officials at the January 5th Public Hearing:

1) Why wasn't the affected community made aware of this process before it began?
   a) Why wasn't RNA notified of the Council's approval of the survey resolution at the September meeting?
   b) Will the community be notified of all future steps in this process?
2) Who approved the Palisade Study Area?
3) What is the difference - legal definition - of the following terms: Redevelopment, Revitalization and Rehabilitation?
4) Explain how the Planning Division surveyed the study area.
5) What is the criteria that the Planning Div. is using to evaluate properties in the study area, ie.: utilization of the property for tax valuation?
6) Is abandoned housing part of the evaluation criteria?
7) How will eminent domain be used in this project, if at all?
8) What legal recourse does a property owner have, if their property is blighted?
9) Is there a time limit from the start of the survey to the presentation of a proposal to the planning board?
10) Provide a clear timetable of the redevelopment process from

the initial survey to the final implementation. Explain each stage of the process.

11) What power does a steering committee, made up of community representatives, have in this process?
12) The community wants to include certain covenants in any plan to guarantee the following:
    a) affordable and senior housing;
    b) the limited use of blighting and eminent domain;
    c) protection of Riverview-Fisk Park as open space park land;
    d) density and height limitations on any new construction; and:
    e) veto power of the steering committee on the original plan and any amendments.
13) Why would the City redevelop a viable neighborhood?
14) What other alternatives are available to improve such a neighborhood?
15) What is the criteria for selecting a designated developer for the plan?
16) Will the plan address the problem of absentee landlords?
17) Will the plan address the need for better municipal services, ie: police ?
18) Will a redevelopment plan increase the tax burden on current property owners?
19) How will the plan benefit current property owners and residents?
20) Is there any truth to the belief that the City is using this project to make money for the politicians and private developers?
21) Has the delay of the Palisade Avenue street paving project had anything to do with the redevelopment plan?
22) Will this redevelopment project come before the planning board on January 11th?]

RNA distributed these questions in a flyer, both in English and Spanish to the local residents advertising the January 5th Public Hearing.

January 11, 2000

The meeting was convened at 7:35 PM by Secretary Maria Tuzzo.

Community Policing:

Sgt. **Mark Ruby** and NTF officers **Lorenzo Tosado** and **Scott Schnee** were the first guests of the meeting. Sgt. Ruby admitted that the police were finally going to address the inadequate police presence in our community that was publicly expressed at the City's January 5th Public Hearing. Therefore he announced that the North District was placing additional police patrols on Palisade, New York and Webster Avenues between Franklin, Hutton and Griffith Streets.

Sgt. Ruby also discussed the placement of a mini precinct on Palisade Avenue. There was a suggestion that instead of placing a trailer on the Avenue to house this police facility, the City should consider leasing a vacant building or placing the trailer on a lot located on another street.

Officers Tosado and Schnee explained that last year they were assigned out of our community in order to get experience in the City's Narcotics Squad. They announced that they were now reassigned back to our area and intended to help reclaim our streets and corners from the drug dealers and gangs that currently occupy them.

RNA suggested that members can help in this fight against crime by a) utilizing the "Suspicious Activity/Crime Report" reprinted every month in this newsletter by recording the vital formation of any unusual activity that will be reported to the police and b) volunteering to participate in RNA's Public Safety Committee.

Zoned Permit Parking:

Carmine Venezia, the Director of the Parking Authority, announced the implementation of the Residential Zone #2 Permit Parking Program for our community. He informed the group that now that the JCPA had recently taken over this Program from the City Clerk's office, it would be able to better coordinate enforcement. He stated that the City was in the process of installing the street signs.

Zone #2 parking restrictions will be enforced between 8AM to 9PM with a two (2) hour window for non-permit holders. The Zone #2 permit sticker is square in shape and should be placed in the rear window of the motor vehicle. He stated that Jersey City public school teachers who lived out of town were angry with having to pay $250.00 for a parking permit.

In response to a question about the installation of parking meters on Palisade Avenue between Franklin and Ferry Streets, Carmine stated that he would wait for the repaving of the Avenue. He intended to use old meters in case of vandalism from residents opposed to the meters. He would contact the community to discussion the status of this project this coming spring.

He answered that all inquiries about installing a carport and curbcut should be directed to the City's zoning official Tony Lambiase. He also announced that JCPA would paint "No Parking" signs in front of a driveway for $25.00.

For more information about this program, see the article on the front page of this newsletter.

Planning & Development Committees:

RNA asked for volunteers to participate in the formation of two committees: 1) to represent our association in the Palisade Avenue Steering Committee, which was to be convened on January 27th and 2) to do research on proposed development projects and zoning re-designations, including meeting with City officials, private developers and other community groups.

For more information, see the articles on the first three (3) pages in this newsletter.

Regular Business:

The membership approved the following expenditures:
a) $50.00 for Christmas lighting for the Park Holiday Celebration;
b) $160.00 for printing of the 12/99 - 1/2000 newsletter;
c) $37.00 for the printing of the special flyer for the 1/28 RNA meeting;
d) $100.00 for postal costs for the newsletters.

There was also an update on the resumption of work on the Mountain Road renovation and the planting of several trees in Riverview-Fisk Park by the Parks Division.

The meeting ended at 9:45. *Maria Tuzzo, Secretary*

CONTRIBUTE TO YOUR NEWSLETTER

Tell us how you feel about the quality of life on your block or in your neighborhood. Have your voice heard! Send all articles, comments and/or recipes to 232 Ogden Ave. *The next deadline is Friday, February 25.*

COMMUNITYUPDATES:

1600 Park Avenue:

The Executive Committee approved RNA's participation along with other civic groups of Hoboken and Weehawken to oppose a large scale residential project located at the northern end of Hoboken between Park and Willow Avenues. A local developer, **Sanford Weis** has proposed building a 344 unit residential complex which will be housed in two 18-story towers.

The developer is asking for several variances. He is asking for a use variance which would allow him to build this residential project in an industrial zoned area. He is also looking for a variance for building height from 8 to 18 stories. He is also requesting a variance of lot coverage from 65% to 74%. This project would also exasperate an already unmanageable traffic problem of congestion along these streets - which are access roads to and from the Lincoln Tunnel and Hoboken.

The civic groups opposing this project are **Coalition for a Better Waterfront, 1600 Park Avenue Committee, Quality of Life coalition, Environmental Committee of Hoboken** and **Friends of Weehawken Waterfront.**

RNA is principally concerned about the negative impact this proposal would have on its senic views of the waterfront and the traffic problem. At a January 18th public meeting, organized by the developer, his experts stated that they were hoping this project would be the first of several large scale residential projects that would be built along Hoboken's perimeter so as not to affect the inner city. However, this concept of a "china wall" would close out the Jersey City Heights community along the Palisade cliffs.

At that same meeting, the developer's traffic expert acknowledged that they were planning to build a 17th Street "Connector Road" to alleviate the traffic problem. However, this "connector road" sounds suspiciously like another extension for a "stealth highway" that the community has been hearing about for many years which would run as a north-south access road between the two tunnels.

The proposal was originally scheduled to go before the Hoboken Board of Adjustment on January 18th but was rescheduled due to the run-over from another application. The following meeting on January 25th was also adjourned because of the snow storm. RNA will notify its members of the next hearing date for this project.

18th Street Proposal:

RNA recently learned about another large scale residential proposal in its own back yard. It appears that a local developer has discussed with Jersey City officials a project to build a 40+ story high rise, below the cliffs, on 18th Street off of Jersey Avenue. This project is in the Jersey Avenue Redevelopment Plan that extends below our community, across the Holland Tunnel access road into Hamilton Park. This proposal could be the first attempt to extend the waterfront high-rise corridor along Washington Blvd. westward toward the cliffs.

RNA has confirmed that several neighborhood groups from the Downtown Coalition of Neighborhood Associations met with the developer on January 20th. RNA is presently attempting to set up meetings with both the City and the developer to learn more about this rather overwhelming proposal.

Friends of Weehawken Waterfront:

It was announced that a compromise has been reached between the **Littoral Society** and **Hartz Mountain Industries** over its proposal to build two high-rise office facilities in front of the Lincoln Tunnel helix in Weehawken. The ten year dispute was mediated by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's (NJDEP) Office Dispute Resolution. The terms of the agreement are that the two towers will be built 200 feet west of the original site, a corner of one of the proposed buildings would be cut off to preserve part of the view and that Hartz would not build anything north of the two towers that could block the view.

The Littoral Society admitted that the agreement was a just compromise and they were not wildly enthusiastic about it because although the view would be preserved - the two towers were still going to be built.

Members of the **Friends of the Weehawken Waterfront** (FWW) worked with the Littoral Society by testifying at the DEP hearings. FWW is currently opposing another large scale waterfront project proposed by Roseland Properties.

RNA and FWW are in the ad-hoc coalition that is opposing the 1600 Park Avenue project in Hoboken. RNA will also be setting up a meeting with members of FWW to discuss other areas of common interest in which we can help each other.

Mountain Road Renovation:

City Engineer **John Mucha** reported that work on the Road has resumed since December 13th. **Green Construction Company** installed new fencing, a pedestrian ramp and signage to discourage pedestrian traffic in this work area.

The main work of digging out the underground caverns below the center curve has been completed and the contractor is beginning the work of sealing their entrances. Once that is completed, then the retaining wall will be installed and work can resume on the surface of the Road. It was the discovery of these caverns that stopped the surface renovation last year.

Mr. Mucha stated that PSEG will be installing at least three more lights for pedestrian safety on the Road. He thinks that the renovation project should be completed and the Road reopened by the summer of 2000. Plans for the renovation of Holland Street have been sent to the state for approval.

Riverview-Fisk Park:

Rodney Hadley, Director of the City's Parks Division, announced that six (6) young trees were planted in Riverview-Fisk Park in the month of December during the warm spell. The trees are a combination of Maple and Lindus, which Rodney states has a beautiful white flower blossom. Two of the trees are planted on the eastern slope, north of the pavilion. Two more are planted in the lawns bordering Palisade Avenue and two are planted along the Palisade Avenue curb between Bowers and Griffith Streets.

Several days before the December 17th Holiday Celebration in Riverview-Fisk Park, **Burns Brothers** of Tonnelle Avenue repainted the memorial plaque dedicated to **Ted Conrad.** Located in the center gardens, the plaque was vandalized last fall by an unknown individual(s) with ethnic slurs. A police report was promptly made and the words were removed. Special thanks to **John Burns** for donating the materials and labor for this project. Burns Brothers originally installed the plaque in 1994.

JOB OPENINGS FOR U.S. CENSUS 2000

The U. S. Census Bureau is looking to hire 1,500 workers to take confidential information from the 560,000 residents in Hudson County for this important undertaking. Individuals who speak a second language are especially encouraged to apply for these positions.

The Federal Government undertakes its census every ten years to determine the official count of the national population and its characteristics, including age, family size and occupation. This information will then be used in determining how our federal dollars are spent on such projects as education, health care, job training, business projects and public transportation.

Census 2000 is an opportunity to make sure that the 21st Century begins with an accurate and complete picture of our own community. Individuals should not fear this process but should help to ensure that our local count is accurate.

Anyone interested in employment positions or for additional information about the census itself, should call the Jersey City/Bayonne office at (201) 433-4451 or the U.S. Census Bureau at (888) 325-4451

ANNUAL SPRING EVENTS

At the February 8th meeting, RNA will begin planning for its annual springtime activities, including the clean-up of the two local Parks, the dumpster weekend and its Park Fair & Flea Market.

There will be a discussion for a specific date and which activities will be selected for the **Spring Clean-up**, including clean-up of empty lots, the planting of shrubs, flowers and trees in our Parks and preparation of the flower and shrub and community gardens. Volunteers that are willing to devote several hours on a Saturday morning and not afraid to get dirty are needed for this project.

A steering committee will be organized for RNA's **Sixteenth Annual Park Fair and Flea Market**. We need volunteers with fresh and new ideas to make this year's fair and market a great success. The event serves as a fundraiser for RNA's many activities, including the publication of this newsletter.

These two outdoor activities help publicize RNA's community work. They are also a great way to meet your neighbors and make new friends.

EDUCATE YOURSELF

Due to the frequent requests of many of its members, RNA is initiating a new column to provide additional information about any of the articles in this newsletter. This month, a list of computer websites which can be used for research is reprinted:

1. City of New Jersey: **www.cityof jerseycity.com**
2. City of Hoboken: **www.hobokeni.com**
3. Coalition for a Better Waterfront: **www.betterwaterfront.com**
4. Friends of the Weehawken Waterfront: **www.weehawkenwaterfront.com**
5. New Jersey Home Page: **www.state.nj.us**
6. New Jersey Office of State Planning (OSP) Home Page: **www.state.nj.us/osp/osphome.htm**
7. NJOSP, Statutes, and Regulatory Authorities: **www.state.nj.us/osp/osp/doc/law/osplaws.htm**
8. Hudson County Economic Development Corporation: **www.hudsonedc.org**
9. New Jersey Law Network: **njlawnet.com**
10. The Lefrak Organization: **www.lefrak.com**

Holiday Activities

The December 14th meeting of RNA was devoted to our annual Holiday Party. Over fifty members, neighbors and friends gathered to enjoy each other's company and celebrate the start of the holiday season. Delicious hot Italian food was catered again by the **Mangia Bene Italian Deli** on Bowers Street (off of Central Avenue). Wonderful homemade desserts were graciously provided by our members.

Everyone had a good time and there were even some "grab-bag" gifts for the attendees. All of the children got an early gift from **"Santa" Jack Rea**. Council President **Tom DeGise, Lieut. Kilduff** and several NTF police officers and members of other Heights associations stopped by to wish RNA happy holidays.

Special thanks to **Doris Brown** and **John McCarthy** for their hard work in setting up the room for the event and **Maria Tuzzo** and Jack Rea for coordinating the affair. RNA would like to thank everyone who celebrated and contributed to our holiday party and wish everyone a happy and healthy new year.

On December 17th, the City organized a Holiday Celebration at the Park pavilion in Riverview-Fisk Park. The pavilion was decorated with lights donated by RNA and **Mayor Bret Schundler** started the festivities by wishing everyone a happy and healthy holiday season. There was entertainment by young dancers from the **Kennedy Blvd. Dance Studio** and holiday music provided by **Joey George**. There was even a visit from Santa Claus. **Supremo Supermarket** provided hot chocolate and cookies given to all participants.

Thanks to the NID, especially Director **Maureen Corrado**, and Managers **Laura Petersen** and **Susan Benavides** for their efforts organizing this special event. A special acknowledgment to **John McCarthy** for providing an extra set of light at the last minute.

On Sunday, December 19th, twelve members and friends of RNA gathered at the Riverview-Fisk Park pavilion and went Christmas caroling along Ogden and Palisade Avenues. First timers **Gail** and **Rick Leon, Carol Hollander, Camille Cesari, Beatrice Bernesconi** and **Dan Derrico** joined veterans **Robert Boesch, Randy Sanford, Doris Brown, Chuck Hollowell, Vito Brunetti** and **Maria Tuzzo** in this musical effort.

We entertained many of our neighbors with traditional songs that were sung mostly in tune. There was even some impromptu harmonizing. As usual several neighbors opened up their homes to the carolers with drinks and refreshments. Everyone had a great time. The evening ended with an open house party at the home of **Dan** and **Beth Derrico**.

This year, the **Salvation Army** picked up approximately 16 bags of groceries, 6 shopping bags of toys and 4 bundles of games collected during the RNA Holiday Food and Toy Drive. These gifts and monetary donations were made possible by the generous contributions of RNA members for the less fortunate members of our community.

RNA thanks everyone for their wonderful response to this worthy effort, with a special acknowledgement for **Claire Gaito, Carol Rebelowski** and **Ruth Conrad**. Many thanks to Maria Tuzzo for coordinating this effort.

BULLETIN BOARD

In Memoriam

It's always sad to announce the passing of another pet of one of our local residents. Today, because we regard our pets as members of our families, their loss is genuinely heartfelt. Whether a dog or cat, their unique personalities added to the delightful essence of our neighborhood.

Molly was the lovely, multi-colored dog of Beth and Dan Derrico. One would always see her accompanying Dan or Beth on their daily sojourns to the back of Mountain Road or through Riverview-Fisk Park. Her pleasant disposition was a throw-back to when dogs were family pets and not trained watch dogs for security.

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

1) Neighborhood Improvement District: Call **547-4974** and then dial **Ext. 8010** for NID Mgr. **Susan Benavides** to complain about any quality of life problem or concern on your block.

2) Parking Authority: To report parking complaints call **653-6969**, and press **#9**. This number is good till 12 midnight. If there is an emergency, Mr. **Carmine Venezia**, the PA Director can be reached through his **beeper 517-3367**, till midnight during the weekdays and till 5 pm on Saturdays.

3) PSEG Lighting: To report a non-functioning light in the Park or on any of our streets, call PSEG at **330-6572** and leave a message with the exact location and number of the street pole.

AVISO • NOTICE

El RNA quisiera anunciar un nuevo servicio. Si usted quisiera receive este boletín de noticias en español por favor entran en contact con a **Maria Tuzzo** en **659-2245**.

Si receive bastantes peticiones y las traducciones son satisfactor continuaremos el servicio para informar mejor a la comunidad: RNA would like to announce a new service.

(RNA would like to announce a new service. If you would like to receive this newsletter in Spanish, please contact Maria Tuzzo at 659-2245. If we receive enough requests and the translations are satisfactory, we will continue the service in order to better inform the community.)

From Valerie's Kitchen:

Claire Davis' Pumpkin Bread

INGREDIENTS:
3/4 cup of sugar, or honey
2 eggs
1/2 cup of oil
1 cup of pumpkin
1 3/4 cup of flour
1 tsp. baking soda
1/4 tsp. baking powder
1/2 tsp. cloves
1/2 tsp. nutmeg
1 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. cinnamon
1/4 tsp. allspice
1/3 cup water, or orange juice
1/2 cup of chopped nuts
1/2 cup raisins

1. Add sugar to oil, then mix with eggs and pumpkin.
2. Sift spices with flour and add to mixture.
3. Add water, nuts and raisins.
4. Pour mixture into greased and floured loaf pan.
5. Bake for one hour at 350 degrees or until done.

POLICEBEAT

Residents should contact their Neighborhood Task Force (NTF) Police Officers if they have a problem, a safety concern or knowledge of criminal activity through the North District's Community Service voice mail at 547-5719 or through the front desk at 547-5350. When leaving a message, include your name, telephone number, street address, the nature of the problem and the date and time of the message. For emergencies, call 547-5477 or 911.

In addition, anyone with information about illegal drug use and/or drug dealing, should contact the JCPD Narcotics Unit at 547-5391 or beeper at 502-9131. *All calls will be strictly confidential.*

On the following page, RNA has reprinted a page from the 1999 edition of the Heights Pride Booklet, entitled Suspicious Activity / Crime Report. Please use it to write down all information about any illegal activity that you witness in our neighborhood. The information will be helpful when you make the report to the police, in their investigation and if necessary, apprehension of a suspect.

[The Heights Pride Booklet, complied by Councilman Bill Gaughan, is a very helpful resource guide to municipal services. Copies can be obtained by calling Tom Dolan, the Councilman's aide at 547-4576 or picking it up at his Heights office at the Municipal Building at 325 Palisade Avenue.]

My New Year's Wish

May your blessing's be many
as you embrace each day,
May you live each day to day,
with nothing to fear
throughout the New Year!

Madeline Rea

The Other Side of RNA

For a change - instead of reading about the lack of local parking, the building of the lite rail, the opening of Mountain Road, building of high risers and so forth which has been going on for years at our meetings - let's talk about how several of our members volunteered their time during the Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's holidays, by dropping in at the Harbor View Health Care Facility to talk with the residents and helping in some small way. This was so rewarding.

Let's talk about how nice our neighborhood looked this holiday season with more people decorating their houses with festive lights. How friendly everyone was, the carolers, the get-together at Beth and Dan's house with all that good food and friendly talk, meeting with neighbors and also the RNA December 14th holiday party and get together.

Jack Rea

NEWSLETTER STAFF
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ASSISTANT EDITOR: *Pam Shaw*
CONTRIBUTORS: *Stephen Carr, Gina Cesari, Kevin Mahony, Patrick Moore, Jack Rea, Madeline Rea, Valerie Rea, Maria Tuzzo*
PHOTOGRAPHY: *Dan Derrico*
CIRCULATION: *Beth Derrico, Jack Rea, Maria Tuzzo*

HELP US PATROL OUR STREETS!

We Need You - Please Contact Us By Phone or Mail

THE JERSEY CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT
NORTH DISTRICT POLICE 282 CENTRAL AVENUE
547-5350 FRONT DESK - 547-5719 NTF OFFICE OR 911

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY/CRIME REPORT

WAS THIS A (CHECK ONE) _____CRIME _____SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY
BRIEFLY DESCRIBE WHAT HAPPENED:
ALCOHOL DRINKING:_____BURGLARIES_____DISORDERLY
GROUPS___NARCOTICS ACTIVITY___NOISE___PROSTITUTION____
WHEN DID IT HAPPEN? DATE:_____TIME:_____

Where Did it Happen? STREET_____
ADDRESS_____
NEAREST CROSS STREET:_____

SUSPECT DESCRIPTION

__MALE____FEMALE____Age____Height_____Weight_____Race_____
Hair Color_____Mustache, beard_____Glasses____Color of eyes_____
Tatttoos, amputations, scars and/or other distinguishing marks_____
Noticeable accents or special characteristics of speech_____

CLOTHING

Shirt_____Coat_____Trousers_____Shoes_____Tie_____Hat
Rings, Bracelets, Necklaces or Earings:_____

WEAPON

Handgun_____Rifle_____Knife_____Club_____Other_____

DESCRIPTION OF VEHICLE

Make_____Year_____Body Style_____Color_____
License Number_____State____(If unable to identify state, color of license):____
Identifying dents, scratches, wheels, markings

ALL INFORMATION IS CONFIDENTIAL

Name_____

Address_____ Phone No._____

PARKING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF JERSEY CITY

394 CENTRAL AVENUE
JERSEY CITY, N.J. 07307
(201) 653-6969
fax (201) 653-7617

PARKING PERMIT APPLICATION

Name:

Address:

Driver's License #:	License Plate #:
Home Phone #:	Business Phone #:

I certify under penalty of perjury that the above information is true.

Signature of applicant Date

THIS SECTION MUST BE COMPLETED BY MERCHANT, EMPLOYER OR SCHOOL OF ZONED AREA

Name of Business/School:

Address:

Phone #:

Executive Officer/Registrar:

I certify under penalty of perjury that the above information is true.

Signature of Executive Officer/Registrar Date

PREREQUISITES

1. A copy of driver's license & vehicle registration
2. Fee
   - A. **RESIDENT:** $5.00 per year per vehicle
     TEMPORARY: $5.00 *(valid for 90 days)*
     TRANSFER FEE: $1.00
   - B. **NON-RESIDENT:** $250.00 per year *(limited to one vehicle)* *(include copy*
     TEMPORARY: $250.00 *(valid for 90 days)* *of current W-2)*

NO PERMIT WILL BE ISSUED UNTIL ALL SUMMONSES PENDING WITH THE JERSEY CITY VIOLATIONS BUREAU ARE SETTLED.

Make non-refundable check or money order payable to
the Jersey City Parking Authority.
(Do not send cash)

THIS APPLICATION MAY BE FREELY REPRODUCED.

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ACE

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AD HERE

(IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN ADVERTSING IN THE RNA NEWSLETTER, PLEASE MAIL YOUR BUSINESS CARD AND A CHECK [EITHER $10/ONE MONTH OR $60/NINE MONTHS] TO RNA, 232 OGDEN AVENUE, JERSEY CITY, N.J. 07307).

JOIN US AT OUR NEXT MEETING
ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 8TH AT
7:15PM AT THE HARBOR VIEW HEALTH CARE FACILITY

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FOR A BETTER LIFE IN THE HEIGHTS

RNA

Vito Brunetti
Chairperson

Kevin Mahony
Vice-chairperson

Maria Tuzzo
Secretary

Beth D'Errico
Treasurer

Len Davis
Sgt. at Arms

COMING EVENTS

RNA Meeting

Tuesday, February 8th at 7:15PM
Location: Harbor View Health Care Center

AGENDA:

1. Opening nominations for RNA Executive Officers
2. Committee Reports
3. Organizing for Springtime Activities